



Design and Access Statement Rev B 23-12-10

23rd December 2010

Planning Division
Culture and Environment
London Borough of Camden
5th Floor, Camden Town Hall Extension
Argyle Street
London
WC1H 8EQ

Dear Sirs,

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED) 8 ST CUTHBERTS ROAD, LONDON NW2 3QL

8 St Cuthberts Road is a detached property currently arranged as two large apartments. It is situated on the corner of Kingscroft Road and forms a pair with the property on the opposite corner, which has already been enlarged.

The 2 bedroom ground floor apartment is large – approx. 96 sq.m. It is proposed to convert this large apartment into a one bedroom flat and a studio flat, and construct a new 2 bedroom duplex as an extension. No works other than refurbishment are proposed to the upper levels of the existing building, or the eastern elevation.

St Cuthberts Road is varied in character – there are a variety of architectural periods and styles represented in the buildings. Directly opposite the proposed extension is open space associated with large apartment blocks. The spaces between the houses are also varied and there is little rhythm to the street frontages, the most defined of which is formed by the 3 storey semi-detached villas on the south side. The north side of the street (including no.8) is more disjointed, with ends of houses from neighbouring streets and Kingscroft Road interrupting the frontages.

Views along the street in both directions are dominated by trees lining the road. The buildings on both sides of the road have generous set-backs which reinforces the character of a tree lined street at the western end of St Cuthberts Road – the buildings on the north side of the street including No.8 are largely obscured by the large trees.

In preparing the proposed design, we have considered the following aspects of the site:

- The plot is fronted by high boundary walls to back of pavement, and a tall garage (higher than a typical garage) along the side boundary, with a further high wall on

the same building line as the existing building.

- The buildings on this side of the street are well set back, with many trees along the frontages.

- Neighbouring house has no windows on side (one small window to rear from a cupboard)

- Existing houses are deep plan, so the gap between the houses is not very noticeable from along the street. The existing tall garage and high wall on the building line already occupy the space between the houses. The roof of the proposed extension would have eaves at the level of the existing wall.

- The level of the existing houses either side of the proposed extension is considerably higher than the pavement - there is a change in level of around a metre between the pavement and the building in each case. However the area in front of the existing garage is at pavement level, separated from the main building level by a retaining wall. This allows the proposed extension to sit lower than the neighbouring properties.

- The set back of the proposed extension from the existing house allows it to read as a separate element between the two existing buildings when viewed along the street. The set-back, together with the modest scale of the extension, would maintain the perceived gap between the houses, and enable the extension to be subservient to the main building. Currently there is a high wall and garage structure on the same line as the main buildings.

- Design of the proposed extension takes on proportions from the adjoining properties – the gable end has similar width to the main gables of the mansard roof house, but has a simpler, more modest duo-pitch roof. The proposed extension is considerably lower overall than the existing buildings, but uses the same materials and detailing. (neighbouring buildings incorporate render, and roofs covered with plain clay tiles)

- The proposed extension would cause no loss of privacy or outlook - the proposed new dwelling would face south to the street frontage only, retaining the private patio garden for the existing ground floor apartment behind.

- The proposed extension would not cause any noticeable loss of light - the only window affected would be large patio sliding doors opening into the rear garden from the ground floor apartment in the existing building. The windows face south west. The garden is situated at the higher level, reducing the effective height of the proposed extension from this side. The effect the proposed extension would have on the daylight and sunlight to the existing patio doors has been checked on drawings 123-221 and 222 of the original application, using BRE standard calculation techniques referred to in Camden Planning Guidance. Since the redesigned proposals are much lower, and with a less bulky roof design, it is clear that daylight and sunlight to the patio doors to the existing living room will remain adequate.

As can be seen from drawing 123-sk213c, an area of 31 sq.m of garden would be lost between the existing garage and the existing house.

At present the provision of green space is limited to one area, with the rest given over to bleak concrete parking areas. The proposals would replace the amenity space lost, and provide additional amenity space better distributed around the property, as well as more 'incidental' planted areas (not included in the amenity space calculation) which would also help increase soft landscape around the frontage. As can be seen from the site plans showing amenity area, it would be possible to incorporate a good deal more soft landscaping to the frontages over and above replacement of any space lost due to the proposed addition.

This would also help reduce the amount of hard landscape, assisting with slowing rainwater run off and improving the appearance of the frontage.

A refurbishment of the existing property would also be carried out as part of the proposals, including repairs to the render and gutter/fascias.

It is also intended, as part of the proposed works to increase the energy efficiency of the property, by using the following measures:

- High levels of insulation to the proposed new extension, in advance of current Building Regulations
- Fitting of a highly efficient heating system and controls, integrated with the renewable measures proposed
- Inclusion of Solar Hot Water Heating panels on the roof to provide approx. 50% of annual hot water heating
- Heat recovery extract ventilation fitted to bathrooms (transfers around 80% of heat from outgoing stale and humid air to incoming fresh air)
- High performance windows to the proposed extension (dg, draught sealed, low-E glass to minimise heat loss)
- Low energy light fittings

New housing developments in Camden are to be built with reference to Lifetime Homes Standards. The criteria for Lifetime Homes have been addressed as follows:

1. The car parking spaces shown could all be increased to 3300mm width if necessary, two of the spaces already have 3300mm width.
2. The parking is within curtilage of the property and at the same level as the entrances. The parking space at the lower level is slightly higher than the lower level of the duplex, accessed using steps which will be designed to be ambulant disabled standard. The slope of the site and the road makes ramped access impractical.
3. The entrance to the new apartment is approached by 4 steps.
4. All entrances will be illuminated using switched and PIR detector lights. Entrances to the newly constructed proposed dwelling will have level thresholds, however the dwellings in the existing building utilize existing entrances which have small changes in level at the threshold. The two entrances to no.8 and 8a have an entrance canopy, but we do not feel it is architecturally appropriate to provide a canopy at all the entrances.
5. n/a
6. In the proposed extension, 775mm clear openings to doors with minimum 1050mm wide hallways will ensure compliance with Lifetime Homes. In the existing building ground floor, where not constrained by existing openings and wall positions, wide doors will be used to allow best access wherever possible.
7. All proposed dwellings, including those in the existing building, can accommodate a 1500mm turning circle for a wheelchair. As can be seen from the open plan layouts, this turning circle could be accommodated in a number of positions to suit furniture layouts.
8. The living room for all the proposed dwellings is at the entrance level.
9. The proposed units are single storey, except the 2 bedroom duplex. This is a small dwelling in which it would not be practicable to provide both a living space and a bedroom at the entrance level.
10. All the proposed dwellings will have a Part M compliant wheelchair accessible entrance level wc. All units are single level so will have the

possibility of fitting a wet room instead of bath, except the 2 bedroom duplex. If necessary, the Part M compliant wc could accommodate drainage for a wet area if deemed necessary.

11. Walls in bathrooms and wc will be lined up to 1500mm high with plywood before tiling to provide fixing for handrails and other adaptations.
12. In the 2-storey, 2-bedroom dwelling a stairlift could be provided at a later date. A knock out floor panel could be formed in the corner of the living room connecting to the bedroom upstairs by trimming of the joists in preparation for any future platform lift.
13. The dwellings wherever possible locate the bathroom directly next to a bedroom, allowing potential to join them and install a tracking hoist. Limitations of the existing building mean that in the proposed 2-bedroom flat at ground floor, existing building the route would be a little longer.
14. It is impractical to provide a fully accessible bathroom to the 2-bedroom duplex since, due to the steeply sloping and constrained site, it requires step access. The bathroom upstairs could be made to accommodate an 'ease of use' wc but the additional space required would in our view detract from the apartment by reducing the size of the bedroom and adjacent storage. The constraints imposed by the existing layouts of the existing building mean that fully compliant bathroom layouts would be impractical in this instance.
15. Cill heights in living rooms will be 800mm with handles no higher than 1200mm high.
16. All switches and sockets (including the ground floor dwellings in the existing building) will be between 450mm and 1200mm above ground level

As can be seen from the above, although the proposal is for a single new unit and the site is constrained in terms of the existing layouts and considerable changes in level, nearly all of the lifetime home provisions can be met.

Set back from the building line, and much lower than the existing buildings either side, well back from the road behind high walls, on a leafy frontage, we feel that the proposed extension would form a discreet addition in the streetscape. The carefully managed scale and detailing would also help integrate the proposals into the context.

We have attended a meeting to discuss the issues with the Duty Planner on 7th October 2009, and have subsequently had input from Hannah Parker in the Planning Division, including e-mails dated 13th November 2009 and 18th January 2010. Advice incorporated into the designs includes the omission of previously proposed 'juliette' balconies on the elevations submitted with this application. Much of the supporting information submitted (e.g. daylight/sunlight testing, sketch perspectives based on a computer model, and amenity space analysis) have been produced following recommendations from Hannah.

In addition, we have met with Jenny Fisher and Alan Wito, to discuss how the proposed extension could better integrate with the surrounding context. Please note that this is a re-application, the previous application was withdrawn to allow re-working of the proposals as follows:

- A reduced amount of development (previous application was for a 1 bedroom duplex and a studio unit over three levels)
- Greatly reduced height of proposed extension to maintain the perceived gap between the existing large buildings either side. (we have shown dotted the roof heights of previous proposals)
- A simplified, more modest design subservient, and complementary to the existing building, constructed using matching materials.
- Incorporation of a set back of the front wall of the proposed extension by 500mm, on recommendation of Alan Wito, to further emphasise the separation of the buildings either side.

As you can see from the position of the dotted line indicating the level of the existing wall and garage, the proposed extension would now read as a roof above a wall of around the same level as the existing garden wall.

The overall set-back of the frontages from the pavement is substantial - around 6-6.5m and there are mature existing trees along both sides of the road.

Comparing the level of the proposed eaves and window positions with the previous application shows the substantial reduction in height of the proposed extension.

We think that overall this makes a big difference, from the road the proposed extension now reads as a single storey extension with rooms in the roof. By reducing the amount of development proposed, the use of a simpler, much lowered roofline, and setting back the proposed extension, we feel that the overall composition would sit discreetly between the houses on either side.

Yours faithfully
for DDWH Architects

WARREN HOWLING
Director

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